

Sebastian Maniscalco

Let's face it: in our increasingly tepid, polite, and politically correct culture we need more people like Sebastian Maniscalco. Forever able to seize the moment, never failing to speak his mind, always telling it like it is, this is one man who isn't afraid to put it all out there. Yes, the Chicago-area born, Italian-immigrant-raised comedian behind wildly successful network specials including 2016's *Why Would You Do That?*, 2014's *Aren't You Embarrassed?*, and 2012's *What's Wrong With People?*, is that little voice within all our heads. The one we are too timid to unleash. Maniscalco is bearing the burden of our bizarre and head-scratching modern-day world. You can thank him later.

Make no mistake: Maniscalco's is a meticulous, hard-won comedic point of view. "Every night you're getting up there and doing something new," says the comedian, who now has hordes of fans pouring into venues across North America to witness his outsize, highly physical brand of comedy. That's when he's not appearing on *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, Jerry Seinfeld's *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee*, or making return visits to late-night shows like *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, *Late Night with Seth Meyers*, and *CONAN*. "It's just working out a muscle, man," he says of maintaining his comedic chops. "You don't become a bodybuilder the first day you start lifting weights. You gotta work each muscle. Same thing with comedy. You gotta flesh out your joke, your bit. You add and subtract. You see what works."

Distinguished by the *New York Times* as having his "own kind of panache," Maniscalco is a success story resulting from years of hard work and a keen self-awareness of innate talent. A natural-born storyteller, one constantly regaling his family with madcap tales at the dinner table, Maniscalco moved to Los Angeles in 1998 and began pounding the pavement on his comedic quest. The tireless worker first made his name at the city's famed Comedy Store where he performed at every opportunity -- even if that meant rushing over to the club on a break from his waiter job at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills. "I felt if I missed an opportunity to be onstage, I missed an opportunity for somebody being in the audience and seeing me." His persistence paid off: then-massive comic Andrew Dice Clay saw him onstage one night and took a young Maniscalco out on the road with him. But not until Vince Vaughn enlisted him for his popular "Wild West Comedy Show" did his career begin to explode. Says Maniscalco: "From there things started to snowball."

It's quite the understatement: Maniscalco now sits as one of the premier standup comedians; and a multi-faceted one at that: recent years have been monumental for the 2016 Just for Laughs Stand Up Comedian of the Year. In addition to starring in his own wildly popular SiriusXM program, "The Pete and Sebastian Show," his major motion picture portfolio expanded in 2017 to include a voice-over for character Johnny the Groundhog in the animated feature *Nut Job 2* and a role in the New Line Feature comedy *The House* starring Will Ferrell and Amy Poehler. Maniscalco was also included on *Forbes'* 2017 list of "The World's Highest Paid Comedians," who praised, "thanks to his enthusiasm and willingness to work, Maniscalco will likely continue to be on *Forbes'* list for years to come." Some performers might be content to take a break. But not Maniscalco.

Shares the man dubbed "one of the hottest comics" by *Newsday* and "one of the funniest comics working stand-up today" by *Esquire*, "Even though I've achieved some success, I will always stay

hungry for more.”

And Maniscalco is living by that mantra in 2018.

The comedian, actor, and best-selling author recently wrapped the spring leg of his *Stay Hungry 2018 Tour* with five sold-out shows at New York’s iconic Radio City Music Hall. *People Magazine’s* “The comedian’s comedian” broke the historic venue’s record with his appearances ranking him its highest grossing comedy weekend in their 85+ year history. Fans around the world *hungry* to see the performance will get their chance as the set was filmed for an upcoming Netflix special. Details will be announced soon.

The landmark appearance follows an already packed 2018. In February Maniscalco released his first book “*Stay Hungry*,” for Simon & Schuster (Gallery Books) making the national best-sellers list. The spring leg of his *Stay Hungry* tour featured 50 shows in cities across the US and Canada, including Montreal, Boston, Chicago, Washington D.C., and Toronto’s Air Canada Center, where he sold the arena out (19,000 tickets), culminating with 5 sold-out shows at Radio City.

2018 will also see Maniscalco expand his major motion picture portfolio to include roles in *TAG*, starring alongside Jon Hamm, Ed Helms and Jeremy Renner as well as *Green Book* alongside Oscar-winner Mahershala Ali, Linda Cardellini, and Viggo Mortensen. Already hungry for 2019, Maniscalco will join a star-studded cast that includes Robert DeNiro, Al Pacino, Joe Pesci, and more in Martin Scorsese’s upcoming film *The Irishman*.

Still, for Maniscalco, the work continues. Says the comedian, “There’s a voice always in the back of my head saying ‘Don’t rest!’”